proposals of Rajasthan Government have been approved:

(i) Establishment of an Earth Station at Sitapur,

(ii) Construction/development of Dharuhera-Bhiwadi road,

(iii) Establishment of Centre for Development of Stones, Jaipur.

The Government has approved an Air Cargo Complex at Jaipur, One Export Promotion Industrial Park (E.P.I.P.) has been set up at Sitapur in Jaipur Distt. and Government has accorded approval, in principle, for setting up second E.P.I.P. at Tapukara, near Bhiwadi. Nine Inland Container Depots/Container Freight Stations have been sanctioned by the Government at Jaipur (2), Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kota, Bhilwara, Bhiwadi, Sri Ganganager and Abu Road. A wood seasoning plant and Common Facility Centre is being set up at Jodhpur for enhancing the quality of wooden handicrafts export.

Import of Sugar from Pakistan

646. SHRI K. R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government imported huge quantities of sugar from Pakistan;

(b) what was the rationale for these imports;

(c) whether this has not hurt our own sugar industry; and

(d) whether all this has not cost us an additional sugar subsidy of Rs. 500 crores?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) Government has not imported any sugar either in this financial year or in the last year on its account. However, under the current Export-Import Policy, the imports of sugar are free and are undertaken by private parties keeping their commercial interest in view.

(c) Representations were received from the sugar industry for enhancement of import duty. Keeping all factors in view, the import duty on sugar was raised from 5% to 20% alongwith continuance of countervailing duty (CVD) of Rs. 850 per tonne w.e.f. 13.1.99.

(d) No, Sir.

Export of Wheat to Bangladesh

647. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has exported wheat to Bangladesh during the last one year;

(b) if so, the quantity exported;

(c) whether this export has had any adverse effect on the availability and the prices of wheat and its by-products in India; and

(d) the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) and (b) A total quantity of 217 MT of wheat valued at Rs. 14.87 lakh (provisional) has been exported to Bangladesh during April-November, 1998.

(SOURCE: DGCI&S, Calcutta)

(c) and (d) Export of meagre quantities of wheat is unlikely to have any adverse impact on availability and prices of wheat and its products in the domestic market.

Ban on Export of Onions

648. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India had put a ban on export of onions last year;

(b) whether some State Governments have requested the Government to lift the ban; and

(c) whether Government have acceded to their request and lifted the ban?